

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
OXFORD DIVISION**

HAROLD HARRIS; PASTOR ROBERT  
TIPTON, JR.; DELTA SIGMA THETA  
SORORITY, INC., DESOTO COUNTY  
MS NAACP UNIT 5574

*Plaintiffs,*

v.

No. 24-cv-289-GHD-RP

DESOTO COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI;  
DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF  
SUPERVISORS; DESOTO COUNTY  
ELECTION COMMISSION; and DALE  
THOMPSON in her official capacity as  
DeSoto County Circuit Clerk.

*Defendants.*

**PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO**  
**DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS**

Pursuant to Local Rule 7(b), Plaintiffs Harold Harris, Pastor Robert Tipton, Jr., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the DeSoto County NAACP Unit 5574 respectfully submit this response to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss Plaintiffs' Complaint, ECF No. 36, in the above-captioned matter. For the reasons detailed below and in the memorandum that accompanies this response, Plaintiffs request that the Court deny Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

Plaintiffs have alleged that the lines that govern the districts for DeSoto County's county offices violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Despite constituting around a third of the County's population, there are no Black-preferred candidates elected to the twenty-five positions in the five offices—Board of Supervisors, Board of Education, Election Commission, Justice

Court, and Constable—governed by these district lines. This result is due to the dilutive effect on Black voting power of the district lines.

Defendants raise three bases for dismissal in their Motion to Dismiss. Each is meritless. First, the Circuit Clerk is a proper Defendant. State law charges her with administering County elections under the challenged 2022 redistricting plan. Plaintiffs' injury is therefore traceable to and redressable by the Circuit Clerk who is sued in her official capacity. Second, Plaintiffs have sufficiently pled their claims. Defendants wrongly either ignore or misread key factual allegations in the Complaint. Finally, binding precedent forecloses Defendants' argument that Section 2 lacks a private right of action. *Robinson v. Ardoin*, 86 F.4th 574, 588 (5th Cir. 2023).

Accordingly, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court deny Defendants' motion.

Dated: December 6, 2024

Joshua Tom (Miss. Bar No. 105392)  
**ACLU OF MISSISSIPPI**  
101 South Congress Street  
Jackson, MS 39201  
Telephone: (601) 354-3408  
jtom@aclu-ms.org

Amir Badat (Miss. Bar No. 106599)  
Brenda Wright\*  
Victor Genecin\*  
Maia Cole\*  
**NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND  
EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC.**  
40 Rector Street, 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10006  
Telephone: (212) 965-2200  
Facsimile: (212) 226-7592  
abadat@naacpldf.org  
bwright@naacpldf.org  
vgenecin@naacpldf.org  
mcole@naacpldf.org

/s/ Daniel J. Hessel

Daniel J. Hessel\*  
Ruth Greenwood\*  
**ELECTION LAW CLINIC  
HARVARD LAW SCHOOL**  
6 Everett Street, Ste. 4105  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
(617) 496-0222  
dhessel@law.harvard.edu  
rgreenwood@law.harvard.edu

Víctor Jones\*  
**NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND  
EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC.**  
700 14th Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20005  
Telephone: (202) 216-2720  
Facsimile: (202) 682-1312  
vjones@naacpldf.org

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

*\*Admitted Pro Hac Vice*

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Daniel J. Hessel, do certify that on this day I filed the foregoing with the ECF System which sent notification to all counsel of record.

This the 6th day of December, 2024.

/s/ Daniel J. Hessel

Daniel J. Hessel